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to the attempt to exclude the interference of the ministry, or to remove the system one step farther from its immediate influence, by the intervention of the supreme triumvirate (I agree with the writer, notwithstanding) we may both in consequence of the opinion be suspected of improper motives, that it is a consummation devoutly to be wished. I know that it is an acknowledged principle, that education is a national concern, and therefore should be under the regulation of the government. If by the government be meant the legislature, consisting of the KING, the NOBILITY, and the PEOPLE fairly and fully represented by delegates chosen really by themselves, I heartily acquiesce in the justice of the maxim: but if this word is meant to express the persons delegated by the king to do his business in the house of commons, the ministers of the day, I confess I see little good likely to result from a scheme, the supreme controul of which is guided by such a fluctuating ephemeral regulator. I see nothing but a new system of new places, pensions, sinecures and influence, extending its ramifications from a triple stem, into every hamlet and cottage in the empire.

The part of the plan relating to the supreme committee or triumvirate seems strongly liable to objection on the grounds just stated.—But though it is far from meeting my approbation, I know of nothing to be substituted in its stead. What I have said, however, not only concerning this branch, but the whole plan, may attract greater attention towards it; if so, it will be found not to be the fanciful theory which I believe it is at present thought.—The rudiments of an excellent system lie involved in it; but much care, and time, and perseverance would be requisite for their extrication. Lancaster has turned the minds of every economical philosopher to the subject of general education. The assertion I am about to make will be deemed a paradox, yet I will not hesitate to declare it. The plan now proposed, or something like it will be found much more practicable, and generally beneficial, than that which has justly been the subject of so much

praise and imitation. To carry the one into effect, the abilities of the founder of the system are requisite in every master; in the other ordinary capacity is sufficient: it will be much easier to find 8000 schoolmasters of the latter kind than 80 of the former.

The subject could be dwelt on with much advantage, and many useful hints been drawn from it, for private persons or single parishes to put in practice on a smaller scale, but, I fear, will never be heartily undertaken by the military financial politicians of the present day, the main object of whose administration seems to be to raise money to carry on war, and to carry on war to raise money.

Wishing every success to a scheme for the improvement of my countrymen, I remain, sir, yours,

QUINCTIUS.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

ON THE EARLY PLANTING OF
POTATOES.

I OBSERVE two of your Correspondents who have written on this subject, have not yet agreed in the accuracy of the statement of expense in the two modes, of the lazy-bed and drill culture. It is not my intention to interfere in this part of the discussion, but I may be allowed to remark that I entirely agree with the assertion of William Gooch, that the lazy bed culture is often preferable, when the palate, and I add the quality as wholesome food are consulted.

But my motive for writing at present is principally to recommend the planting of potatoes in either mode at an early period of the season. Potatoes planted at a late period are seldom as firm and good as those planted more early: and yet the practice of late setting has for several years been gradually increasing. Quality is thus sacrificed to quantity. To those who raise potatoes for their own use, little reasoning is necessary to show that the calculation is a mistaken one, as potatoes of an inferior quality are not profitable, but occasion great waste in the use of them, by the worst of them being thrown

aside, when they are brought to the table. They who raise potatoes for market are less careful in this respect, and look more to the quantity in the scale or the bushel. Farmers sometimes allege that they must necessarily be late in the potatoe culture by reason of their other spring labour not being completed; but probably the procrastination may often be attributed to the wish to procure an increased quantity.

If such a practice of increasing the quantity at the expense of the quality were weighed in the scales of *conscience*, it would be found not to stand the test. Thus every proper motive of sound policy, and of honesty, and humanity, is in favour of early setting. I mean by early setting, potatoes planted through the month of April, but farthest not to exceed the middle of May. K

To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.

THE REMONSTRANCE.

A FREE People, possessed of reason and feeling, will complain of public grievances, so long as they are continued; and will pursue prudent and legal means of redress. Nor should they, on this account, be branded with the opprobrious epithet of disaffected, or stigmatized as incendiaries. Those who sincerely endeavour to destroy corruption and promote reformation amongst men, are the friends of good order and well established government, and such only as truly deserve to be accounted loyal. They are the pillars of states. It is their zeal to increase and perpetuate the power and prosperity of that realm, of which they form a part, that urges them to wield their tongues and pens in combating mal-administration, and struggling for the extirpation of corruption.

Since the days of William the third, penal statutes have been represented as an infringement on the natural rights of a large portion of the population of the British empire. Since the incorporation of churches and states, and the civil establishment of religion, tithes, either in their principle, or in their mode of exaction, have been depicted as national evils. On these

hackneyed topics little now remains to be said.

So long as tithes bear unequally upon the community, where no species of equivalent is received for them; while their quantum is considered to be at the disposal of unfeeling proctors, and ever variable and augmenting in proportion to increased industry, so as to be a heavy *embargo* on so important an object as agriculture; so long as they harrow the feelings of those who are yearly goaded to a conscious sensibility of the evils attending upon the corrupt mode of their imposition and collection, they will ever be a bone of contention between the tithe-farmer and the peasant, the seeds of alienation of affection, between the laity and the clergy, a stumbling block in the way of the progress of religion, and a temptation to disaffection in the subject to his ruler.

As to Catholic claims, reason and justice demand, that all those who live quiet and peaceable lives, who are amenable to the laws, and support the state in person and property, should have an equal and common share in whatever civil privileges their situation and circumstances require. The truth and force of this proposition may be granted, and yet the continuance of disabilities deemed expedient as a measure of policy. That policy, however, which is incompatible with equity and reason, is ignoble, dangerous and immoral. The welfare or security of a state, cannot be supposed to involve in it the destruction of natural rights. Nor can reasons of state supersede the law of equity. A right is not fairly withheld upon the surmise of the claimant's future abuse of it. A wholesome law deprives no man of privileges, until by his misconduct he has forfeited them. Fears may be entertained of promoting Catholic subjects to high and important stations and trusts in the legislative and executive departments of the state; but why entertained respecting them and not others, or more than others, is not easy to imagine! Men of different and opposite sentiments in the theory of religion will be found to have natural principles of honour, integrity, and faithfulness, and also to want all these. Subjects of the best and the worst states, who have made